

FACT SHEET

CONSUMER SENTIMENT
ON AUTOMATED VEHICLES

Background

Talk of the advent of self-driving vehicles has permeated the news for several years now, however, these cars are not yet available to the general public. As a result, consumer acceptance of automated vehicles seems to be stuck in neutral. This survey seeks to understand how consumers currently feel about self-driving vehicles and related issues. A deeper knowledge of consumer sentiment can help identify the next steps the industry and other stakeholders need to take to help move consumers towards greater acceptance.

Key Findings

- Only **one in ten (12%)** drivers say they **would trust** a vehicle to drive itself while they are in it and **28%** are **unsure how they feel**.
- **Six in ten (57%)** Americans would like to see more information in news stories or other public sources about who will be **legally responsible for crashes** with self-driving cars. This is followed by **laws** to make sure self-driving cars **are safe (51%)**, how vulnerable self-driving cars will be to **being hacked (49%)** and **easy-to-understand information** about how self-driving cars **will work (44%)**.
- **Seven in ten (72%)** Americans would **feel safer** riding in a self-driving car if they had the ability to **take over control if something goes wrong**. A similar proportion (**69%**) would **feel safer** if there was a **human backup driver**. Half (**47%**) would **feel safer** knowing the self-driving car has **passed rigorous testing and inspections**. Four in ten (**42%**) would **feel safer** after seeing or **experiencing a demonstration** prior to getting into a self-driving car.

To understand consumer attitudes toward self-driving vehicles, AAA pursued the following lines of inquiry:

1. Do U.S. drivers fear riding in a self-driving vehicle?
2. What kind of information would Americans like to see more of when it comes to self-driving vehicles?
3. What would make Americans feel safer about riding in self-driving vehicles?

Methodology

Due to a change in methodology in 2020, this year's survey results are not directly comparable to results from prior years. This survey was conducted January 17 – 19, 2020, using a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population overall. The panel provides sample coverage of approximately 97% of the U.S. household population. Most surveys were completed online; consumers without internet access were surveyed over the phone. A total of 1,301 interviews were completed among U.S. adults, 18 years of age or older. The margin of error for the study overall is 4% at the 95% confidence level. Smaller subgroups have larger error margins.